

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6916

BILL NUMBER: SB 206

NOTE PREPARED: Dec 30, 2002

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Reimbursement of Nonphysician Certified Surgical Assistants.

FIRST AUTHOR: Sen. Gard

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: As Introduced

FUNDS AFFECTED: X GENERAL
X DEDICATED
FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: This bill requires health insurance policies and HMO contracts to provide coverage for intraoperative surgical care services provided by a physician or a nonphysician certified surgical assistant.

Effective Date: July 1, 2003.

Explanation of State Expenditures: This bill requires an HMO or individual or group accident and sickness policy to provide reimbursement for intraoperative surgical care services provided by an assistant to the surgeon. An assistant to the surgeon includes: a physician; a physician assistant; an advanced practice nurse; and a nonphysician certified surgical assistant (CSA) for services rendered.

This bill is not expected to impact state or local health expenditures. Implementation may actually reduce expenditures related to surgical care as CSAs and other nonphysician assistants are reimbursed at a lower rate than are surgeons that act in a first assistant role. However, this bill does not require a person or entity that provides surgical services to employ or utilize a nonphysician certified surgical assistant.

Background:

A surgeon may elect to have either another surgeon, a CSA, or other nonphysician assistant assist in a surgical procedure. The second surgeon can bill their services as a first assistant, however, there is not an industry standard for payment for nonphysician services. This bill seeks to establish a consistent reimbursement protocol for all staff serving as a first surgical assistant. In addition, surgeons may be more likely to hire CSAs and use fewer surgeons as first assistants if the insurance company paid for these costs directly. In most cases the surgeon is responsible for paying the CSA fee out of the surgeon's own fee.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: See *Explanation of State Expenditures*.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Agencies that utilize HMOs or an individual or group accident and sickness policy as a health care provider.

Local Agencies Affected: Agencies that utilize HMOs or an individual or group accident and sickness policy as a health care provider.

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